

THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

LONELINESS BRINGS DOUBT.—CONFESSION 179

Dick has gone on his trip and I am here all alone.

It is queer how soon you get used to being married—to feeling that you could not live without your husband; that the world is a howling wilderness of loneliness when he is gone!

I sometimes wonder if a man has this sense of loss of companionship; is his need of your presence after he has once had you as great as your need of his?

Which means—when you bring the abstract down to the purely concrete—I wonder if Dick is missing me as much as I miss him? Of course, I know that he will be busy all through the day, but oh! I want him to want me at evening—to wish he was going to see me when he comes back to the hotel at night.

I wish he had not said that to me about being a better man when he knew I was, at least, in the same city. His disbelief in "absence makes the heart grow fonder" savors of that traitorous liting heresy of Tom Moore:

"When far away from the lips that you love,
You've but to make love to the lips that are near."

I suppose I must hope there'll be no lips near—at least very near, while mine are far away.

I am sending Dick tonight that little verse I wrote about "all-in-all to you" as my first letter. Dick has never written me a letter in his whole life. When he is away he sends me telegrams, and if he is near enough he calls me up on the long-distance wire, but he never writes me. I wonder if he has ever written to Eleanor Fairlow or any other girl?

He will probably think my little poem just "a bit of fantasy from out that very clever brain of yours," as he sometimes says to me when I am especially sentimental; but, Dick, dear,

it's just a cry from my heart. "I would be all in all to you," just as every woman would be all-in-all to the man she loves. Don't throw away the joy of having me "all-in-all" to you for the sake of some fancied form or the sudden curiosity to see and know what is behind the smile of the other woman, or a particular reverence that holds your wife as high as the angels.

If you would only be the one man who would come to understand that in conserving love, not in dissipating it, is only found real bliss.

Don't give your wife the dregs of promiscuous lovemaking—I wonder why I have written that. I am not jealous of any other woman—not even Eleanor Fairlow—but sometimes I can't help thinking that each one of the little things that I do to charm Dick are only the same little flatteries that he has known before. Nothing that I can do can have the charm of surprise.

A man always pays for what he knows—a woman for what she does.

I believe that every wife revolts against the double standard of morals. Her husband may be faithful to her after marriage—that is all society asks—but she can never forget the taste of those forgotten kisses that other women have placed upon his lips.

Gracious! What is the matter with me? I must be getting morbid. No, that is not the matter. It is because I have been idle almost all day. Tomorrow I am going down to buy a gown for Kitty Malram's wedding.

I wonder if she is feeling as ecstatic as I did in the days before my wedding? I believe it is really the happiest time of a woman's life—for afterward we find out that life is only a jumble after all and mortals can only imagine what heaven is like—they can never realize it on earth.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)